

REMARKS

Claims 1-12 were pending in the present application prior to amendment herein. Claims 4 and 8 have been canceled, and new claims 13 and 14 have been added. Claims 1-3, 5-7, and 9-14 are therefore currently pending.

The Applicant would like to thank the Examiner for the gracious telephonic interview extended to the Applicant's undersigned representative on May 6, 2008. During that interview, the differences between the currently claimed invention and the prior art were discussed. The claim amendments made herein are for the purpose of clarifying the present claims and also highlighting the patentable features that were discussed during the telephonic interview. To clarify claims 1 and 6, for example, the recitation of privacy control levels has been added to element (a), and the table recited in element (d) has been moved to element (b).

No new matter has been added to the present application by the present amendments, with support being found in the specification, claims, and figures as filed. Support for the recitation of the table comprising the names of users of the web card system and also authorization codes associated with such users in element (b) can be found for example in paragraph [0042] of the present application, as published, which recites "a table of corresponding authorization passwords or security codes in association with a list of persons' names having or not having such authorization." The generation and transmission of a web card to an authorized user of the system, as recited in elements (e) and (f), are likewise supported in paragraph [0042].

Support for the recitation in element (d) of determining whether a search request includes an authorization code associated with a user of the web card system can be found in the specification in paragraphs [0044] – [0045] of the present application, as published, and in Figure 6B (see step 111). In addition, support for the transmission of an authorization code, as recited in new claims 13 and 14, can be found in the claims as filed and in paragraph [0043] of the present application, as published, which recites that "the registered user X send out or the web card system sends out for the registered user X

to selected or designated groups of people, at step 103 [Figure 6A, see step 104], such as the user Y, the corresponding contact information along with the passwords or codes.”

Due to the number of changes made to the claim language in this Amendment, a clean set of claims is being submitted herewith as Attachment 1 to this communication. Attachment 1 reflects the amendments made herein, but the underlining and deleted text have been removed.

In view of the foregoing, the Applicant respectfully requests entry of this Amendment and consideration of the present application as amended herein.

Rejection of Claims 1-6, 9, and 12 under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a)

Claims 1-6, 9, and 12, were rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) as being unpatentable over U.S. Patent Publication No. 2003/0069874 to Hertzog in view of U.S. Patent No. 6,374,259 to Celik. The Hertzog reference describes a means for managing personal contact information in an online environment, and discloses generally that a virtual card containing a user's personal information can be published to a recipient of such a virtual card (paragraph [0074]). In the Hertzog system, the personal information to be published to a recipient is displayed to the recipient whenever the recipient accesses the client application of this system, as long as the recipient has previously been granted permission to receive such information. In this regard, paragraph [0175] discloses that “[t]he method 360 commences at block 362 [of Figure 25] with the receipt by the client application 18 of an identification from a viewing user of a target user (i.e., a contact),” and Figure 25 illustrates that the subsequent steps of this process involve simply identifying the publication permissions granted to the “viewing user” (the recipient of the contact information) and then displaying such information (see blocks 364 and 366 of Figure 25).

By contrast, in the present system and method for controlling privacy in a web card system, before the contact information of a first user is published to a second user (the recipient), the second user must provide an authorization code. As was discussed during the telephonic interview conducted on May 6, 2008, the present system makes use

of a table which lists authorized users (recipients) in association with a list of authorization codes [paragraph (b) of claims 1 and 6], where the authorization codes are associated with contact information of different privacy levels. A request from the second user for contact information of the first user must therefore be accompanied by the appropriate authorization code before the system will generate a web card for this second user.

One advantage of the present system and method is that, as compared to prior art systems, the present web card system provides greater flexibility and convenience to the owner of contact information with regard to providing access to such information to other users of the system. The owner's contact information will not be available to another user of the web card system until the owner sends an authorization code to that user, thus giving the owner of the contact information control over when the other user has access to a web card, without having to change any settings of the web card server at the time that the authorization is provided to the other user. The authorization code can be provided to the other user without involving the web card system at all, such as by sending the code to another user from an unrelated email system or even in non-electronic form, although the web card system itself can also send out such authorization codes.

In the Hertzog system, by contrast, the contact information of a first user of the system becomes available to a second user as soon as the second user's permission to receive such information is established by the first user in the web card system. The Hertzog reference therefore does not suggest the present system and method for controlling the privacy of web card information, or the advantages of the present system and method.

The Celik patent discloses a system similar to that of the Hertzog reference for controlling access to the contact information of an individual. The Celik system can be configured for limited information access by other users of the system, in which case the information owner must enter information into the system to identify users who are allowed access to the owner's information (column 6, lines 46-55). The Celik patent therefore does not supply the deficiency noted above with respect to the Hertzog

reference, and independent claims 1 and 6 of the present application are therefore patentable over a combination of the Hertzog and the Celik references.

Claims 2-5, 9, and 12 depend from independent claims 1 or 6 and are therefore patentable for the foregoing reasons, in addition to including independently patentable subject matter. In view of the foregoing, the Applicant respectfully requests that the rejection of claims 1-6, 9, and 12 under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) be withdrawn.

Rejection of claims 7-8 and 10-11 under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a)

Claims 7-8 and 10-11 were rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) as being unpatentable over U.S. Patent Publication No. 2003/0069874 to Hertzog in view of U.S. Patent No. 6,374,259 to Celik, and further in view of U.S. Patent No. 6,643,784 to McCulligh. The McCulligh patent, however, does not supply the deficiency noted above with respect to the Hertzog and Celik references. McCulligh discloses a password generator, but this disclosure does not suggest the use of a table of authorization codes established by a content owner in a web card system for granting access to different versions of a web card to other users of the web card system. The McCulligh patent therefore does not make obvious the present system and method. In view of the foregoing, the Applicant respectfully requests that the rejection of claims 7-8 and 10-11 under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) be withdrawn.

Conclusion

The Applicant believes that all pending claims, claims 1-3, 5-7, and 9-14, are in condition for allowance, and a Notice of Allowance is respectfully requested. If, however, there remain any issues which can be addressed by telephone, the Examiner is encouraged to contact the undersigned at the telephone number listed below.

Please charge any fees due in connection with this Amendment or credit any overpayment to Deposit Account No. 19-2090.

Respectfully submitted,

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